Patna
Purnea
Jammu & Kashmir
Anantnag
Badgam
Baramula
Doda
Kargil
Kupwara
Pulwama
Punch
Srinagar
Manipur
Bishnupur
Chandel
Imphal
Senapati
Tamenglong
Thoubal
Ukhrul
Meghalaya
South Garo Hills
Nagaland
Kohima
Mokokchung
Mon
Pheu
Tuensang
Wokha
Iunneboto
Orissa
Jajpur
Punjab
Kapurthala
Sikkim
East
West
North
South
U.T. of Andaman & Nicobar Islands
U.T. of Daman & Diu
Diu
U.T. OF Lakshadweep

[Translation]

Foreign Tours

772. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned, 'Adhikarion Ne Ki Ek Sal Mein So Se Jyada Videshi Yatrayain' appearing in the *Dainik Jagran* dated May 6, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the period from 01.04.1997 to 31.3.1998, there were a total of 200 visits abroad by Department of Telecommunication Officials. Details all given in the enclosed statement.

(c) Proposals of Visits abroad are critically examined in the commission at the level of Advisors, Members, Chairman and Hon'ble Minister of Communications and only minimum essential visits are permitted. Most of the visits are for fellowships and training offered by International institutions to which India is a member country. Similarly, in International Telecommunication Fora, it is essential to be present to safeguard national interests in the policy matters.

Statement

Foreign Visits during the period 1.4.1997 to 31.3.1998.

1. 50 Visits in all by Chairman (TC), 4 members, 5 Advisors and Additional Secretary (T).
2. 74 Visits in all by Chief General Managers, Sr. DDGs, DDG's, G.M.'s, and Joint Secretary.
3. 49 Visits in all by Director's and DE's.
4. 12 in all by Sr. SDEs and S.D.E.'s.
5. 15 in all by Officers of the Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Wing.

Total : 200

Private Investment in Power Sector

773. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to states :

(a) whether the possibilities have been explored for joint ventures of private and public sector companies in the hydel power sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) The Government of India had announced a policy in 1991 of attracting private sector investment in generation projects including hydro projects. The response from private entrepreneurs has not been encouraging. Of the 13 schemes with an aggregate capacity of 4328 MW for which "in principle" clearance was accorded by the Central Electricity Authority, only four schemes namely Baspa (300 MW) in Himachal Pradesh. Maheshwar (400 MW) in Madhya Pradesh. Vishnu Prayag (400 MW) and Srinagar (330 MW) in Uttar Pradesh have made some progress. Promotion of joint ventures between private companies (both local and foreign) with Central Hydel Public Sector Undertakings will be encouraged. The Government will provide financial support by way of equity contribution and also undertake the construction of the associated transmission lines for the evacuation of power to the load centres.

[English]

Voting Rights to Families displaced from J & K

774. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to secure voting rights to persons and families displaced from Jammu & Kashmir and encamped in different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the percentage of such displaced persons who exercised their franchise in the recent Lok Sabha polls?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS, AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) The migrant electors from Kashmir Valley were permitted to exercise their right of franchise through postal ballot and for the purpose a special scheme was laid.

(c) 8.96 per cent.

New Power Policy

775. DR. ASIM BALA :
SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have drafted or propose to draft a new power policy ;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time frame within which it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) Power planning is an ongoing exercise and policy is reviewed periodically, *inter-alia*, taking into account the short-term and long-term needs, availability of fuel, finances etc. The draft Ninth Plan. *inter-alia* emphasises on the following :

(i) Early completion of the on-going projects.

(ii) Maximisation of benefits from the existing plants by improving the Plant Load Factor (PLF).

(iii) Reducing the Transmission & Distribution Losses and systems improvement.

(iv) Greater emphasis on public and private investment in generation, transmission and distribution.

(v) Setting up of National Grid for inter-regional exchange of power.

(vi) Rationalisation of electricity tariff.

(vii) Establishment of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) at Centre and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERC) at States level.

(viii) Demand management and energy conservation measures by different end-users.

Research Works in Science

776. SHRI CHINTA MOHAN :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether liberalisation has eroded research works in science;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether youths are showing less interest in getting themselves enrolled in scientific and technical education;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) its likely impact on the development of the country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) It may not be correct to state that the youths are showing less interest in getting themselves involved in scientific and technical education. In fact there is a keen competition among the youth to gain admission in science courses and Institutes of Technical Education. Government on its part are also encouraging students to pursue scientific and technical education by instituting student fellowships, research fellowships on enchanced rates.